


Megiddo Message

DEVOTED TO THE CAUSE OF CHRIST



The Kingdom of God—When?

TAKE TIME

OH, WHY SHOULD THE SPIRIT OF
MORTAL BE PROUD?

“FOLLOW ME”

THE SECRET OF SUCCESS

MUSINGS OF THE EDITOR

MEDITATIONS ON THE WORD

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

EVERLASTING GRACE

Megiddo Message

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Percy J. Thatcher, Editor

A religious magazine, devoted to the cause of Christ and published for the dissemination of Bible truth alone. The MEGIDDO MESSAGE will

- Strengthen your faith in the Bible
- Answer perplexing religious questions
- Give you courage for these uncertain times
- Help you live above the world's moral corruption
- Reveal to you how to develop a character acceptable to God
- Bring peace and stability to your life

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A Soldier's Incentive

Dear Brother:

There was a regiment of soldiers marching through one of the Philippine Islands during World War II, which, I think, is a good illustration of the true soldiers of God's army. A city that lay fifty miles from the landing by the seashore had to be reached before any soldier of the regiment could have a fresh bath, a change of clothes, hot meals, and a few days of rest. Now, unless we have had the same experience ourselves, we shall never know the joy these things bring to a weary soldier in combat. For the promise of a fresh bath, clean clothes, hot food, and rest, the morale was high and the determination to reach that city was great, although most of the way had to be covered by foot over high mountainous terrain with marshy valleys between, which sometimes, during hard rains, would cause the soldiers to sink almost to their waistlines in mud. Then there was the stiff resistance of the enemy. But every man was determined to let nothing stop him from reaching that city with all its promises.

Are we that determined today in God's army to reach that beautiful City of Zion, with its wonderful promises of eternal rest, to be clothed with immortality, and be able to eat and drink of the wonderful knowledge of God forevermore? If so, let our morale be high; let us rejoice in the Lord always as we climb up the mountain of perfection and tread the valleys of self-denial, that our Captain, who has gone on before, may greet us at the gate of the City with a "Well done."

Hartsville, S. C.

H. L. S.

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Let the bell sing out the warning,

"The night is far spent,

A morn will soon dawn."

Make haste! Work! Repent!

Sayreville, N. J.

S. L. W.



SERIES:

THY KINGDOM COME

PART TWO

THE KINGDOM OF GOD—WHEN?

THE central theme of Scripture, THE KINGDOM OF GOD—manifest, physical, glorious, eternal—is the unifying note, the binding cord, uniting the central thought of all the Scriptural writers who in turn were moved by one directive—the Mind of God. Through them and from them, by letting them interpret their allegories, similes, dreams and parables, we can obtain a pattern four-square, significant and accurate.

However, of all the subjects of Holy Writ none perhaps has suffered such a wide diversity of opinions as that of the Kingdom of God. What and where it is have extended in scope from a mere figure of speech or perhaps a place in the human heart to a state or condition of the church, or some ethereal and indefinable abode on high. The time of its establishment has been placed in various periods spanning from the Day of Pentecost to specific days in our present century.

Date setting—expressly prohibited by the Book (Mark 13:32), but indulged in by various men during the last century—has resulted in disillusionment, skepticism, confusion, until a modern writer, accredited as an authority on the subject, says as follows: "We live in that end-time between . . . a kingdom which is present and which we may enter, and a Kingdom we can neither be nor create." He expresses it as an "ever coming Kingdom," though he who seeks it "can never see the ineffable glory of the rule of God triumphant on earth; nor can all his efforts usher it in."

How utterly tragic if noble men through the ages—such as the unflinching Jeremiah, the heroic Antipas,* the valiant Paul, the King Himself, who dedicated their lives to this loftiest goal of seeking the Kingdom, and many who submitted to the horrible death of the martyr rather than relinquish their hope—shall have lived and died in vain! How utterly divested of hope and purpose should the present-day Christian be if he could not rely implicitly upon such Scriptural certitudes as Luke 13:28 which bears the definite assurance that men shall actually see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the Kingdom of God! This and numerous other pointed passages permit no retreat from or evasion of the glorious Scriptural fact that God's Kingdom—literal and not mythical, visible and not imaginary, physical and not spiritual—shall be established on earth sometime. When?

The Kingdom Promised

Remember, God once had a real, tangible kingdom upon earth with Saul established as the first king. It was extended by David. It reached its zenith with Solomon in all his glory, the splendor and magnificence of whose temple and reign was such that the queen of Sheba said that not the half thereof had been told. That kingdom, a mere shadow of the eternal future realm, was, as foretold by Ezekiel, to be overturned, overturned, overturned until He comes whose right it is, and "I will give it him" (21:27).

This same promise concerning the restoration of an overthrown kingdom appears again in the New Testament. "After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things" (Acts 15:16, 17).

Contrary to the false hope of blinded millions who vainly dream of going to heaven at death, Jesus said He was as a nobleman going into a far country to receive a Kingdom and after a long time to return (Luke 19:11, 12; Matt. 25:19). This assures us that Christ is to be the King of that realm and that earth is to be His domain, but the question with which we are concerned in this article is, When is that Kingdom to be established?

"After Six Days"

That Moses envisioned the great Day of Christ's Kingdom is assured to us in his deep allegory of Genesis where he wrote, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion" (1:26). He, understanding the plan of God's spiritual creation, was quoting the angels who were his teachers. They, the *elohim*, said, Let us make a multitudinous or church-dimensioned man (Christ the Head and the church His body, Col. 1:18), and let them rule, or have dominion over all peoples of the earth.

When God's Son at last receives His promised inheritance of the Kingdom, God rests. When, according to the Genesis allegory, shall this rest begin? He rests when He has finished His work—logically. We read, "God finished on the sixth day those his works which he had made; and on the seventh day he desisted from all these works of his which he had made" (Gen. 2:1, 2, Septuagint Version). His rest begins on the seventh day when He desists from work.

* Antipas suffered martyrdom at Pergamos, the headquarters of Emperor-worship in Asia. Emperor-worship was regarded as the special enemy of Christianity. See Rev. 2:13.

A Bible rule for calculating time as stated by Peter—"One day is with the Lord as a thousand years" (II Pet. 3:8)—expands the allegorical "six days" to 6,000 years. It is evident then that the man made in God's image, the church, is to be finished at the end of the six days or 6,000 years. On the seventh day when God rests He turns the Kingdom over to the man made in His image, of whom His Son is the glorious Head. Then Christ shall take dominion over every living thing upon earth. This is Moses' style of describing the Kingdom which shall be established at the end of the 6,000 years of man's probation.

Jesus confirmed Moses on the matter of the six days. The occasion was the Transfiguration. Prior to this He had promised His disciples that some among them should not taste death until they had seen the Son of man coming in His Kingdom (Matt. 16:28). What expectancy this must have aroused! Then in response to their eager longing, "After six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light" (17:1, 2). Ere these disciples tasted of death they saw a preview (by vision, v. 9) of Christ in His glorified form in the Kingdom. The vision was perfectly timed to impart specific knowledge as to when they should anticipate the grand reality—"after six days." Parallel to the Genesis allegory: After the six thousand-year days of man's rule, Christ shall be seen in His glorified state in the Kingdom of God. The six days of labor and toil under the law were also types of man's rule (Ex. 20:9, 10; Heb. 10:1); then follows the great sabbatic rest of 1,000 years, the millennial reign of Christ and the saints.

After Four Universal Empires

The prophet Daniel arose to the summit of his mortal career when the proud empire of Babylon was at the height of its glory. It was in that splendid court and before the magnificent throne of Nebuchadnezzar that Daniel made known his immortal interpretation of the king's mysterious dream of the great metallic image. Four universal empires were there represented; four monarchies of men were to succeed one another and be successively destroyed or dissolved. This the prophet clearly envisioned when only the first was in existence. In the head of gold he saw the soon-to-be vanquished Babylonian Empire; silver breast and arms indicated Medo-Persian pre-eminence; this followed by the brazen-coated Greeks represented in belly and thighs of brass; the last phase of the image—legs of iron and feet part of iron and part of clay—prefigured the iron rule of the Romans; the inclusion of clay, their long, lingering stages of degeneracy. These occurred just as foretold.

When the image of man's rule should be completed and finished, what should be his destiny? According to the dream, a stone cut without hands should destroy and scatter the image. Then should the stone become a great mountain which would fill the whole earth. Thus Daniel and his contemporaries and all who should read the prophecies in the ages to come, even as we, should know that down in the last extremity of the fourth universal kingdom there should be a change. A stone cut and shaped without hands smote the image, not in the head, nor the

breast, nor the thighs, but the feet—down when the time allotted to man's kingdoms should have expired. "Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth" (Dan. 2:35).

The conclusion is told in graphic language in verses 44, 45, "And in the days of these kings the God of heaven shall set up a kingdom never to be swept away, with a sovereignty that shall never pass to others; it shall break all these kingdoms to bits and make an end of them, but it shall stand for ever, as you saw how the stone was hewn from the mountain by no human hands and how it broke to bits the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, the gold. A great God has told the king what is to happen in the future: the dream is certain, and its meaning sure" (Moffatt). This Kingdom, superior to all the kingdoms of men and of everlasting duration, should be the fifth universal empire—God's eternal Kingdom on earth.

The time of the establishment of the Kingdom is being focused, for the fourth and last of the universal empires of men has waxed and waned. The Roman Empire—fallen so many centuries ago from its iron zenith, divided, broken—has reached the state symbolized by the toes of the image: the iron is mixed with miry clay; the empire fast crumbles to decay. Numerous ambitious generals—Hannibal, Napoleon, Mussolini, Hitler, Stalin and all his aspiring successors—cannot by the most clever strategy or the latest nuclear weapons (should they resort to such) establish a fifth world empire, for the God of Heaven long ago decreed that His Kingdom would replace the *fourth* empire of man. "In the days of those kings the God of the heavens shall set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, nor shall the kingdom be left to another people; it shall break in pieces and annihilate all these kingdoms, but it shall stand forever" (Dan. 2:44, American Trans.).

This same marvelous foreknowledge of the rise and fall of empires is apparent again in Daniel 7 with the same grand climax by means of divine intervention in human affairs. After the arising of four successive beasts out of the sea of nations (which parallel the four phases of the image), "the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever" (7:18).

The beasts are significant. First, a lion indicates the strength and supremacy of Babylon; a bear which raised itself on one side shows the Persian phase of the second world empire to be of greater eminence and duration than the Median phase; next in the four wings of a leopard can be seen Alexander's four generals who ruled the Grecian Empire after his premature death. The fourth beast, "dreadful and terrible," has an identifying "little horn"—the papal outgrowth of the Roman Empire—which wore out the saints, changed God's times and laws, and "beat down true religion" (7:25; 8:12).

When, in the words of our subject, shall the Kingdom be established? It follows next in sequence. "The judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his [the little horn's] dominion, . . . And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most

High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him" (7: 26, 27).

After the Apostasy

We have found that the Kingdom of God will be established after the six days of man's rule, also after the fourth universal empire has flourished and declined. The text in Daniel 7 which we just examined indicates also a third element of human rule which must precede God's Kingdom on earth. It is the apostasy, the 1,260 years of spiritual darkness or total departure from true religion, a work incited and carried to its dire culmination by the little horn.

Jesus also includes this dark interlude in His outline of events which must precede the end. When our Lord sat upon the Mount of Olives, His disciples came to Him privately, seeking to know the sign of His coming and of the consummation of the age (Diaglott). There in intimate discourse with His closest associates, the Christ outlined the events that should follow through oncoming centuries.

Reading through the chapter (Matthew 24) we follow Him as He foretells the destruction of Jerusalem which some of their generation should witness (vs. 4—20).

Next in the great chain of events was to be the long dark period of apostasy: "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened" (vs. 21, 22).

Paul adds to the catalog of prophecy his prediction of the same event. In warning the Thessalonian brethren not to expect the consummation of the ages and Christ's return in glory during that era, he said, "Now with respect to the Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . Let no man in any way deceive you, for it cannot come unless the apostasy comes first" (II Thess. 2: 1—3, Weymouth). Paul knew that there was to be a falling away from the truth, from the faith once delivered to the saints.

Would the apostasy continue unbroken until the second advent, so that Christ at His return would find no living believers to welcome Him? No! Jesus in that same memorable discourse of Matthew 24 informed men of all ages that He would not return in glory until—

After the Re-awakening of the Fig Tree

A fig tree, long barren and then productive, was Jesus' means of illustrating the renaissance of truth after the apostasy. When that fig tree and other trees of the field bear fruits of holiness, then, in Jesus' words, the Kingdom of God is "near, even at the doors" (v. 33).

But Jesus was specific, warning them clearly, "of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only" (v. 36). Then follows the urgent warning: "Wherefore be you also ready, because at what hour you know not the Son of man will come" (v. 44, Douay).

By another illustration Jesus indicates that the apostasy will end prior to His second advent. Following an era when all nations should have succumbed to spiritual slumber, a midnight cry would awaken a few virgins

from their sleep and initiate preparation to meet the Bridegroom at His return (Matt. 25: 1—13).

Here we must always bear in mind that neither the shooting forth of the fig tree nor the midnight cry brought the apostasy to a close in a technical sense. Not until one person had actually borne the fruits of holiness, not until one had confounded Romish error in both doctrine and practice, did that dark night come to a close.

When that apostasy was finally terminated by moral perfection, then Paul's words are applicable: "He will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth" (Rom. 9: 28). After the end of the apostasy, we need not look for weary centuries to elapse before the consummation of the ages. The work will be *cut short* by the Lord's return.

Signs which Portend the End of the Age

The great apostle Paul's zeal in preaching of the Being who had so dramatically altered his life was ever flaming with increasing fire of a boundless faith and inflexible purpose. The Kingdom of God was his ultimate goal. He indicated that he had completed his moral preparation for it, when he said, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing" (II Tim. 4: 7, 8).

As to *when* that new government was to be set up on earth, he made plain that the actual date was not revealed. "But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night" (I Thess. 5: 1, 2). But that the living expectants should not be taken unawares, our informant continues, "For when they shall say, Peace and safety: then sudden destruction cometh upon them" (v. 3).

The cry of—or, more accurately, *for*—peace and safety is something fairly recent in human history. The Hague Conferences near the turn of the century were the real beginning of the modern peace movement. A Permanent Court of Arbitration, the League of Nations, numerous peace conferences, the Kellogg Pact, and now the UN—all instruments to promote peace and safety—establish these as the "times and seasons" of the second advent. And that peace and safety cry will continue (whether steady or intermittent, we cannot predict) until the advent hour dawns, be it early or late.

To us who live in this auspicious era and are cognizant of this momentous sign, pointing to the imminence of the second advent, Paul addresses the words that follow: "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. *Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober*" (I Thess. 5: 4—6).

Of all who prophesied as to when the Kingdom shall be established, He who is heir to its throne, being the most concerned, should be the most informed. The Pharisees had asked Jesus when the Kingdom should come. In answer He said, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there!

for the kingdom of God is within you" (Luke 17: 20, 21). This text, wrongly translated, is plain when we consult the Greek Testament which says that "within you" should be rendered "among you, in your presence; alluding to His own presence in their midst." Even if the Kingdom could be in the hearts of men, it would not be in the hearts of those wicked Pharisees who were questioning Him. The marginal reference in most Bibles quotes it as "among you," implying the presence of the King, not that the Kingdom was in their hearts.

Jesus continues in the chapter to answer the question propounded by the Pharisees: When shall the Kingdom come? "As it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed" (vs. 26—30). Those are the signs that shall portend the return of the King. When we should arrive at a prevalent state of morals so low as that of Sodom, and such excessive pleasure seeking as in the Noachian times, we could look for His appearing to bring in the Kingdom. We need no reminders, no statistics, to convince us that the sign is amply fulfilled. Signs of the pleasure craze and of immorality cover our billboards; they infest the dark dens of iniquity; they walk at large and unrestrained upon our streets. Of a truth, "the great day of the Lord is near, . . . and hasteth greatly" (Zeph. 1: 14).

The beloved physician Luke in chapter 21 gives certain visible indications of the time of the end: "And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken" (vs. 25, 26) preliminary to their passing away with a great noise which Peter foretells (II Pet. 3: 10). Unrest, instability of nations, is the tone of our times! The political heavens are shaken indeed in strong confirmation of the prophecy.

Although the day and hour is not for us to know, the times and seasons are most obvious, for when this state of affairs exists, the following verses emphasize: "Then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh."

"Be Like Men Who are Expecting Their Lord"

The importance of being fully prepared and ready for the return of the King far exceeds that of knowing just when He will come to establish that Kingdom. Whenever the subject is mentioned, the urgency of readiness is stressed. Jesus' words as recorded in Luke 12 cover the subject very pointedly. He enjoins His listeners to make the seeking of that Kingdom their first business (v. 31), encouraging them if so doing, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the king-

dom." Then follow verses 35—38: "Keep your loins girt and your lamps lit, and be like men who are expecting their lord and master on his return for [original] a marriage-banquet, so as to open the door for him at once when he comes and knocks. Blessed are those servants whom the lord and master finds awake when he comes! . . . Whether he come in the second or the third watch of the night and finds them thus alert, blessed are they!"

For preparation Peter urges the addition to our character of the Christian virtues, and concludes, "For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (II Pet. 1: 11). This testimony teaches us that it is by doing these commandments that we can be ready in pure white garments of righteousness (Rev. 19: 7, 8) when Jesus comes, and so an abundant entrance shall be ministered unto us into His Kingdom. Then will the King say the sweetest words to fall on mortal ears: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you."

NEXT ISSUE: EVENTS PREPARATORY TO THE KINGDOM.

Take Time

EVERYWHERE we go, men are in the quest of time. Nearly everyone laments his shortage of time. But alas! they use (or misuse) it as if it were to last forever. In this Christian walk, the wise use of time is doubly important. True, we grapple with crowded schedules, but some things are imperative:

Take time to THINK. *It is the source of power.* If we do not stop to think we shall have many regrets. How many accidents, tragedies, and thoughtless, injurious words and acts are accompanied by the words, "I didn't think!" Above all, think well before you speak. By one careless word you may cause a brother to stumble. "Ponder the path of thy feet" (Prov. 4: 26, 27).

Take time to READ. *It is the fountain of wisdom.* Choose well your reading material! Do not waste time reading mediocre books, choose the best. A good library is a treasure; but, best of all, God has given us a wonderful Book full of commandments, admonitions, warnings and promises. If we do not read them carefully, we cannot know what God expects of us. "Whereby when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ" (Eph. 3: 4). We must renew our faith by reading all the precious promises of the reward which God has laid up for all the faithful.

Take time to PRAY. *It is the greatest power on earth.* All through the ages prayer has been the guiding light in the lives of holy men and women. "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation" (Matt. 26: 41). "Pray without ceasing" (I Thess. 5: 17). In reading the Bible, we find that people prayed in times of stress for help; in times of peace and plenty to express thankfulness; and when they strayed from the right, to ask God's forgiveness. We, too, as obedient children, must pray to our heavenly Father to ask His help and to thank Him for our many blessings.

Take time to BE FRIENDLY. *It is the road to happiness.* "A man that hath friends must show himself friendly:

and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother" (Prov. 18:24). We should take time to cultivate our friendship with the children of God who are striving to be led by His truth. So diligent must be our effort to be true friends and to develop true friends that in our friendship we will attain the noble plane described by Paul (I Cor. 12:26), if one member suffers, all members will suffer with him; and if one member be honored, all will rejoice with him. Such friends are dearer than natural relatives.

Take time to GIVE. *It is too short a day to be selfish.* We must give freely of our time, our talents, ourselves. "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). Others have given their all for the cause of Truth. Can we not afford to give of our abundance to help others? Someone may be needing a word of encouragement. Give it! Let him know that a friend is standing by, ready to help in his time of need. Give to further the good work. Giving of our substance increases the joy of possession. You are doing it for God. Others have given to you. Now, give of your best to the Master.

Take time to WORK. *It is the price of success.* Nothing worthwhile was ever attained without work. "Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise" (Prov. 6:6). No matter what happens, work! It is the best way to keep your mind in the right channel.

Take time to BE HOLY. *It is the key to time unending.* Though it crowd out a thousand other interests, take time to be holy—*make* time. When, after the refining fire of God's judgments, all that remains of the earthly cares and hopes which clutter our lives are the cold ashes of unfulfilled desire, then the reward of holiness will be just beginning to be reaped.

"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." Let no one deceive himself. The good characteristics in this life and the assurance of life hereafter will not come of their own accord. We must take time to attain them. Let each one strive to make the most of his time.

WHO EVER FINDS TIME!

Where is the one who ever finds this thing called Time that everybody talks about? Nobody "finds" time.

Time is taken by force of will, and bent to the purpose it must serve.

Anyone who wants time and needs more of it must remember that.

For instance—a commonplace of everyday experience is to get a job well done by giving it to a busy person, which might seem to be the most irrational way.

The reason is that so-called busy men and women are those who so arrange their work and hours that they are always abreast or ahead of their responsibilities, and can fit an extra one into the schedule.

They find time by making it.

Opposed to those are the dreamy ones who never "know where the time goes." And the constitutional fuss-budgets who run from one half-finished task to another, frittering the hours away, and wondering why they have so little time.

So we say—you don't find time. You never will find it. You take it when you want it badly enough. You make it.

Oh, Why Should the Spirit of Mortal be Proud?

Oh, why should the spirit of mortal be proud?
Like a swift-fleeting meteor, a fast-flying cloud,
A flash of the lightning, a break of the wave,
Man passes from life to his rest in the grave.

*The leaves of the oak and the willow shall fade,
Be scattered around and together be laid;
And the young and the old, and the low and the high,
Shall molder to dust and together shall lie.*

The infant a mother attended and loved,
The mother that infant's affection who proved;
The husband that mother and infant who blessed,
Each, all, are away to their dwellings of rest.

*The maid on whose cheek, on whose brow, in whose eye,
Shone beauty and pleasure—her triumphs are by;
And the memory of those who loved her and praised,
Are alike from the minds of the living erased.*

The hand of the king that the scepter hath borne,
The brow of the priest that the miter hath worn,
The eye of the sage, and the heart of the brave,
Are hidden and lost in the depths of the grave.

*The peasant whose lot was to sow and to reap,
The herdsman who climbed with his goats up the steep,
The beggar who wandered in search of his bread,
Have faded away like the grass that we tread.*

The saint who enjoyed the communion of heaven,
The sinner who dared to remain unforgiven,
The wise and the foolish, the guilty and just,
Have quietly mingled their bones in the dust.

*So the multitude goes, like the flower and the weed
That wither away to let others succeed;
So the multitude comes, even those we behold,
To repeat every tale that has often been told.*

They loved, but their story we cannot unfold;
They scorned, but the heart of the haughty is cold;
They grieved, but no wail from their slumber will come;
They joyed, but the voice of their gladness is dumb.

*They died—ay! they died; and we, things that are now,
Who walk on the turf that lies o'er their brow,
Who make in their dwelling a transient abode,
Meet the changes they met on their pilgrimage road.*

Yea! hope and despondency, pleasure and pain,
Are mingled together in sunshine and rain;
And the smiles and the tears, the song and the dirge,
Still follow each other, like surge upon surge.

*'Tis the wink of an eye, 'tis the draught of a breath,
From the blossom of health to the paleness of death,
From the gilded saloon to the bier and the shroud—
Oh, why should the spirit of mortal be proud?*

"Why?" again I inquire, when his strength is so small,
And his power (think of God's!), it's just none at all.
For God in His mercy has offered a plan,
A plan of redemption to save erring man.

*To mortals who low in humility bow
And yield all to God, He to THEM will allow
Long life in His Kingdom with never a cloud!
So WHY should the spirit of mortal be proud?*

"Follow Me"

IT WAS springtime in sunny Galilee. The blue sea shimmered beneath the warm rays of the morning sun. Across the pebbly beach the green hills laden with the flowers of spring stretched far away to the fair blue skies.

In a quiet cove a little distance from the busy city of Capernaum, Andrew and Simon sat in a ship industriously mending their nets. Above the gray hills of the Gadarenes the morning sun was mounting higher, and they were anxious to push out. Andrew paused from his work, looking up. Far up the hillside, wending his way along the dusty road, was a solitary figure. As he drew nearer, Andrew's heart rejoiced; for it was their beloved friend, Jesus, the carpenter of Nazareth.

Now He was coming toward them, descending the sunny hillside. As He neared the shore He called to them across the water, "Follow me."

Straightway they left their nets and followed Him. That was the beginning of their wondrous career. Unlearned, simple fishermen, they started out with high hopes and beating hearts, leaving homes, occupations and earthly ambitions to follow a despised Galilean preacher.

When the disciples so readily answered the Galilean Call, they may have but vaguely comprehended either the difficulties or the delights which their response entailed. Only time, temptations and trials could reveal to them the details of the following. They were to learn that treading in the footsteps of Jesus not only meant that they *forsake all* but that they *take up their cross*, a cross of self-denial, of self-renunciation, for the sake of the Gospel. It not only meant forsaking something attractive—home, occupations, ambitions—but it also involved the accepting of something heavy, burdensome—the cross which must be carried every step of the way.

Such are the difficulties, intolerable when considered independently, but nothing by comparison with the delights, the "manifold more" of joy and satisfaction which the follower of Christ reaps as he treads in his Master's footsteps (Luke 18:28-30).

With the approaching of Jesus' last trial and execution His footsteps led in ever-increasingly difficult ways. As the pathway narrowed and grew more rugged, many of His followers stumbled and fell under the weight of their cross. Three times Peter denied his Master; Judas betrayed Him; all save John forsook Him. All but Judas recovered themselves, struggled to their feet, and traveled persistently on, bearing the cross of Christ.

It was after His resurrection when Jesus appeared to His disciples on the shores of Galilee that the details of "Follow me" were further disclosed. Peter was evidently still beset by that all-too-human weakness of jealousy.



John was the beloved disciple, and Peter, seeing him in his accustomed favored position, said to Jesus, "What shall this man do?" Jesus replied, "What is that to thee? follow thou me."

Ah, yes! "Follow me," meant not only forsaking tangibles, nets and boats, but they must forsake *all*, even those undesirable traits of their nature which had been woven securely into the very warp and woof of the character. Such instruction cut to the quick, and though Peter was still bleeding from the freshly inflicted wound of correction, yet he grasped his cross and followed on.

Nor was the pathway of the succeeding years to be of his own choosing. The Master spoke again: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdest thyself, and walkest whither thou wouldest; but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not." Maturity and ripened old age in the truth would be indicated by such an absolute forsaking of one's independence or feeling of self-sufficiency that he would stretch forth his hands in humble petition to be girded and carried whither he would not. Such self-abandonment to be imposed upon the stouthearted Peter! Yet the Master continued, saying, "Follow me." And Peter followed!

What was the mighty impelling objective which forced these men into such seemingly insufferable pathways? It was the goal toward which the body of Christ moves ever forward, onward, upward—the Mount of Zion! The redeemed who shall occupy that position of eminence in the future, who shall stand with the Lamb upon Mount Zion, are they which "follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God."

"Whithersoever." That word embraces the length and the breadth and the depth and the height of Christian achievement. Will you answer the Galilean call to follow the Lamb "*whithersoever he goeth*"?

"In simple trust like theirs who heard,
Beside the Syrian sea,
The gracious calling of the Lord,
Let us, like them, without a word,
Rise up and follow Thee."

The Secret of Success

A BAR of steel is talking: "It's all a grind, nothing but a grind." And the sparks flew up from the grinding. But from the shaft came forth a sword to save a cause.

A pebble is speaking: "It's all a grind, a dull, beastly grind." And it burned with hot indignation in the hand of the cutter. But the pebble glowed with light ere long, and another gem was added to the world's store.

A block of glass is speaking: "It's all a grind from morning to night." It twisted and turned under the buffers. But the burnished glass became a lens and men were given to see that which had hitherto remained invisible to the naked eye.

A workman is speaking: "It's all a grind, a dull, killing grind." But he stayed on the job as the assembly belt moved ceaselessly on. And from the end of the line poured forth the goods that were to make the highest standard of living the world had known.

Everywhere we are reminded that the secret of success is repeated effort along any line of endeavor. The world moves as a result of the workman on the assembly line.

It's the turn, turn of the wheels that takes a train across the continent; it's the repeated explosions that generate power in the automobile engine and the airplane. It's the constant surging of the water against the turbine blades that generates electrical power. It's the rap, rap of the hammer that drives the nail into place. It's the constant, determined effort that breaks down all resistance, sweeps away all obstacles. Repetition is the fundamental rhythm of all progress.

The student in school who fails at the first attempt to master a hard lesson or problem, must remember the old saying, "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again."

Repeated effort is the secret of success in music as well, for without practice there could be no progress. A story is told that the young Paderewski failed in his first attempt to convince the teachers of the famous Warsaw Conservatory that he could become a musician. "Your fingers are too short and thick," they told him, and advised him to give up music. But he was too busy practicing to be discouraged and eventually became a world-famous musician in spite of his handicap.

"Life is a quarry out of which we are to mold and chisel and complete a character." A stone when first taken from the quarry is rough; it requires much chiseling and grinding to make it fit to be used in a building. Our spiritual condition is parallel: our character is covered with rough places, the evils of human nature, that must be smoothed off. This will be a slow, tedious process. Little by little and bit by bit the work will be accomplished. We can come forth a polished stone to be used in the building, or a jewel to adorn the temple, if we will submit to the repeated blows of the hammer of truth and the daily grinding necessary to remove the rough places.

Over and over again,

No matter which way I turn,
I always find in the Book of Life
Some lesson I have to learn.
I must take my turn at the mill;
Once doing will be in vain;
I must work at my task with a resolute will—
Over and over again.

Musings of the Editor

IN MOVING in and out among our fellow men, do we realize the value of a bright, cheerful countenance and the effect it produces upon those with whom we are brought into contact? The cultivation of interest in others, the achievement of some difficult and noble purpose, the ministrations of sympathy and kindness will prove wonderful aids in this direction. Not only do our smiles cheer others, but if we are sad and try to shape our face into a smile we begin to feel better ourselves. The Wise Man's mind ran in some such channel, for he declares: "Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend" (Prov. 27: 17).

There is so much to fill our hearts with thanksgiving: life, "rich gift of God," with all its attendant blessings; the hope of eternal life, full and abundant, free from all sorrow, pain, and death. These should indeed give strength and invigoration to the inward man, even though the outward man may be the victim of suffering, pain, and disease.

Indulge no murmuring; oh, restrain
Those lips so ready to complain!
And, if they can be numbered, count
Of one day's mercies the amount.

We would do well to ask ourselves, What does life mean to me? What am I doing with it day by day? Does it mean an unceasing gratitude to God, upon whom I am dependent for every breath I breathe? Do we realize the blessings of the use of limb and muscle? of a sound mind, of the joy of sight, whereby we are enabled to look upon the faces of those we love and respect, and on the wondrous beauties of a divine creative hand, which the sightless eyes are not able to do? Let us daily and hourly meditate on our blessings and live our lives joyously, hopefully, lovingly, and devoutly, radiating sunshine wherever we go, with thankfulness in our hearts to the "living God who giveth us richly all things to enjoy." And remember, faithful, loving obedience to His commands now will grant us the future, eternal blessings which will be more than eye hath seen, ear heard, or hath entered into the heart of man to conceive.

THE MOMENTS

The moments are little and unseen things!
Light forms have they, and unseen wings.
They glide o'er our heads with the morning beam,
And slip from our grasp with the day's last gleam;
They tick in our ears with the staid old clock,
They stand at our hearts and there warningly knock.
They bid us not loiter, if fame we would win,
They knock, and entreat us to gather them in.

O list to the moments: though little they seem,
They are bearing your bark on a swift, silent stream;
And onward, still onward, you glide from the shore
To that vast, boundless ocean where time is no more.
Take heed to the moments; for with them they bear
Of gems the most precious, and diamonds so rare.
Take care of the moments; for life's but a span,
Then carefully hoard them, O vain, dreaming man.

—Selected.

Meditations

On the Word

"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." (Romans 8: 13).

Throughout the New Testament the inward struggle between right and wrong is dramatized as a warfare between flesh and Spirit. Living after the flesh is not difficult to define. It is simply doing as we please. Civilization, art, science, government, law, improvement of every kind, call for struggle and self-denial. As men live together in groups for mutual aid and protection, they must in some degree curb their individualism and defer to one another. Self-denial, as opposed to self-indulgence, is the mark of the truly great. Self-indulgent rulers (and rulers are responsible for the greater part of recorded history) are seldom remembered with pride; usually they are either useless weaklings or monsters of cruelty.

Races, nations and individuals grow only by struggle. Cessation of effort means the end of progress; once we let go, the forces of moral gravitation do the rest. The perils of self-indulgence are warned against by the great Lawgiver of Israel in Deut. 12: 8, "Ye shall not do after all the things which we do here this day, every man whatsoever is right in his own eyes." But they did it anyway, just as Moses knew they would. "For I know that after my death ye will utterly corrupt yourselves, and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you" (Deut. 31: 29). In the Book of Judges is revealed the periodic anarchy into which the nation fell, and the disastrous results thereof. The cause of all the trouble is tersely stated in the closing words of the book: "In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes."

Through the period of the monarchy the warfare between flesh and Spirit, between ease and effort, continued, with the same results, for the laws of harvest are immutable. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (Gal. 6: 7, 8). We may twist and turn, may philosophize and rationalize as much as we like, but we cannot get around or over or under this eternal principle.

God never intended to save a man who has his own way. If He did, the future would be a replica of the past and present, which Heaven forbid! The quest for salvation is the highest of aspirations, and calls for the very highest degree of self-denial and discipline. Individuality must not only be curbed but completely lost. "None of self and all of Thee," is the standard: and it is by no means easy to attain. St. Paul attained it only after a lifetime of heroic struggle with his own "old man," but he found it a good fight and he fought it well, to the very end. From the depths of his experience he wrote to the Galatian brethren and to us, "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the

flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would" (5: 16, 17). This is the mighty "dam" across the turbulent stream of human passions and instincts that diverts their force into useful channels, and without which these energies would run to waste, or worse.

That we might be able to recognize our enemies, he then proceeds to paint for us a stark, realistic picture of our natural selves. "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like."

Note well those last three words. They are the blanket provision which eliminates the last loophole. Anything which resembles or is in any way related to the evils specified by name is in the same class. Note also that there is no distinction made between the large and small, serious and trivial, mortal and venial. Sin is the transgression of the law (I John 3: 4), and the violation is what condemns us, not the particular law which is broken. "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all," says James (2: 10). The wages of sin is death, penal or eternal death, and there are no qualifications or exceptions. "They which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."

These, then, are the works of the flesh, all too familiar to most of us and a constant challenge to our higher nature. There can be no truce or compromise with the works of the flesh, for while they live they rule. "Mortify" means to put to death.

The instrument used to mortify the works of the flesh is, of course, the tried and true sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God (Eph. 6: 17). That is what our text says, is it not?—"through the Spirit." "The words which I speak unto you," said Jesus, "they are spirit, and they are life" (John 6: 63). As the flesh has its works, so the Spirit has its fruits, as listed in Gal. 5: 22, 23, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." In the flesh dwells no good thing (Rom. 7: 18; 9: 8), but in the Spirit is found every virtue.

The one and only way to determine if a man is governed by the flesh or by the Spirit is to look at his fruits. "By their fruits ye shall know them," said Jesus. This is another mighty principle which all the sophistry of all men of all ages cannot alter or evade. Fruits never lie. If we practice the works of the flesh we shall die—eternally. If we bear the fruits of the Spirit we shall live—eternally. It is as simple as that. The matter is entirely in our hands. If we ourselves do not wield the two-edged sword until our lower nature is slain, it is certain that no one can or will do it for us.

We have all been on the side of the flesh, and it is useless to say we have not. But that can be changed. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (II Cor. 5: 17). Not instantaneously, but gradually, as we replace every work of the flesh with a fruit of the Spirit, as we sublimate our basic instincts to good instead of allowing them to be perverted to evil. When we have become new creatures in all things, there is nothing more to fear. "If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live"—forever and ever in a world without end.

Your Questions Answered



BIBLICAL PERSONAL CURRENT

Do you have a question? Personal replies to Biblical questions will be sent to any correspondent, and counsel will be offered on problems pertaining to the spiritual life. The MEGIDDO MESSAGE will publish only the most helpful discussions for the benefit of other readers. No names shall be mentioned.

Please explain I Corinthians 15: 29, about being baptized for the dead.

The Bible plainly teaches that nothing can be done after death (Eccl. 9: 10). As the tree falls, so shall it lie. Moses and Samuel might plead our cause (Jer. 15: 1), Noah, Daniel and Job might be our advocates (Ezek. 14: 14), but the record is closed; by it we will stand or fall. Hence we are sure that it would be impossible for the rite of baptism, or any other ceremony, to benefit a man or woman whose life had ended.

This verse is incorrectly translated, and as it stands it makes a contradiction in the Scriptures. The Greek word *hyper*, here rendered "for," can mean "in behalf of," but it also has the more widely used definition of *beyond*. All the overcomers are baptized with one saving baptism (Eph. 4: 5; Rom. 6: 3, 10), in order to attain the state *beyond* the dead (I Cor. 15: 53). Paul's argument here is, If there is no resurrection of the dead, the event upon which all future life and reward are dependent, then the effort is futile, our hope is vain, and we may as well "eat and drink, for tomorrow we die." A careful reading of this chapter, vs. 12 to 32, will make it clear that this is the only reasonable explanation of this passage.

How many Christs can we read about in the Bible?

Three.

1) There is "the man Christ Jesus" (I Timothy 2: 5) whose birth the prophets foretold (Deut. 18: 15, 18, 19; Isa. 7: 14—16; Mic. 5: 2); who, in the fullness of time was born unto Mary (Gal. 4: 4); who, as a child learned obedience at His mother's knee (Heb. 5: 8); entered into His public ministry at the age of thirty; was crucified, buried, resurrected; ascended bodily to heaven; and will return in like manner at the last day (Acts 1: 11).

2) There is the spiritual Christ, the truth, or wisdom of God, which existed from the beginning with God (Prov. 8: 22—30), and was first introduced on this planet some 6,000 years ago when, after ages of prehistoric development, someone lived who was capable of receiving benefit from that wisdom. Later, this wisdom of God was seen in the spiritual food ("bread and wine") which Melchisedec, priest of the Most High God, provided for Abraham (Gen. 14: 18). This same spiritual food, called the "spiritual Christ," was available to the children of Israel under the name of life-giving water and strong meat (I Cor. 10: 1—4). Paul identified this same wisdom of God as "Christ in you" (Col. 1: 27).

3) Lastly, there is Christ the Head, and the Church His body (Col. 1: 18), which together compose the multitudinous Christ; or, in the language of the Revelator, the Lamb, and with Him 144,000, or Christ and the faithful of the 6,000 years (Rev. 14: 1); or, according to Gen. 1: 26, the man made in God's image (the multitudinous Christ) who is to have dominion over the world to come.

What are the ordinances which were nailed to the cross (Col. 2: 14)?

In short, Christ's life and teaching nailed to the cross—cancelled, nullified, made void—the Mosaic Law. The Mosaic Law was a temporary national Law, given to gov-

ern Israel while she existed as a nation. Nearly 600 years before Christ, the nation was dissolved in the Babylonian Captivity. Nevertheless the Jews prided themselves in handing down from generation to generation that old Law as a sort of heirloom—though it was worn out and valueless. Christ dispensed with the old law by restating a superior law. See Matthew 5 where we read, "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: but I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart," etc. This new and better law reached and required control of the thoughts and intents of the heart; it demanded heart purity, over which the Mosaic Law held no jurisdiction.

Can the Christian indulge in china novelties, and numerous other trinkets which are so popular in many homes today?

Such trinkets consume two of our most valuable commodities: time and money, for both of which we are accountable to God. We have the definite command: "Make the very most of your time" (Eph. 5: 15, Moffatt). A room cluttered with trinkets cannot be cleaned expeditiously. The excessive time there consumed could be used more profitably in any of numerous spiritual enterprises, such as storing the mind with gems of truth, to meet the demands of I Pet. 3: 15, "Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you."

Another command, "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread?" (Isa. 55: 2) prohibits using our means for things of no service or benefit.

As a lone member of the Megiddo Mission in this city, and having withdrawn from church and social activities, I feel depressed and discouraged at times, and in need of encouragement. Can you help?

The best source of encouragement is our better conduct. Launch an "all-out" campaign against your most pernicious evils. Stiff fighting is bound to note progress. Progress, in turn, creates hope; and hope will banish despair.

If you are convinced that you have the one saving truth, if you are earnestly contending for that faith, then we would say to you in the words of Isa. 41: 6, "Be of good courage." We are fast nearing the age when instead of true believers being numbered as "one of a city, and two of a family" (Jer. 3: 14), all shall know the Lord, from the least to the greatest (Jer. 31: 34).

Do other worlds have a Christ? or was the Christ that we know their Saviour in His pre-existence?

Christ did not pre-exist. His birth was a subject of O. T. prophecy (Deut. 18: 15, 18, 19; Isa. 7: 14—16; Mic. 5: 2). He had no existence prior to those prophecies, nor before the woman from whom He was made existed (Gal. 4: 4). (The Christ which came down from heaven, often alluded to in St. John, was the spiritual Christ, the truth, and not the man Christ. See above.)

We know from Eph. 3: 10, 11 that God's plan for the redemption of this earth is according to His eternal purpose which has been carried out on innumerable worlds. Therefore, since Christ is declared to be the future and eternal Ruler upon this earth (Rev. 11: 15), every other world unquestionably has its Saviour.

Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good,
For His kindness is everlasting.
Let Israel now say,
That His kindness is everlasting.
Let the house of Aaron now say,
That His kindness is everlasting.
Let those that reverence the Lord now say,
That His kindness is everlasting.

Psalm 118

When in straits, I called upon the Lord;
He answered me with abundant room.
With the Lord for me, I do not fear
What man may do to me.
With the Lord for me as my helper,
I shall gaze in triumph on those who hate me.
It is better to seek refuge in the Lord
Than to trust in man;
It is better to seek refuge in the Lord
Than to trust in princes.

Though all nations surround me,
In the name of the Lord I will ward them off.
Though they encompass, yea, surround me,
In the name of the Lord I will destroy them.
Though they surround me like bees,
Though they burn like a fire of thorns,
In the name of the Lord I will ward them off.

I was sore beset, about to fall,
But the Lord helped me.
The Lord is my strength and song,
And He is become my deliverance.
Hark, the joyous shout of triumph
among the tents of the righteous!
The right hand of the Lord works victoriously.
The right hand of the Lord is exalted.
The right hand of the Lord works victoriously.

I shall not die, but live
To tell of the deeds of the Lord.
The Lord has disciplined me severely;
But He has not given me up to death.
Open for me the gates of victory,
That I may enter through them to give
thanks to the Lord.
This is the gate of the Lord,
Through which the victors may enter.

Everlasting Grace

I thank Thee that Thou hast answered me,
And hast become my deliverance.
The stone that the builders rejected
Has become the chief cornerstone.
From the Lord has this come,
It is wonderful in our eyes.
This is the day that the Lord has made;
Let us rejoice and be glad therein!

O Lord, deliver, I pray;
O Lord, give success, I pray!
Blessed be he who enters in the name of the Lord;
We will bless you from the house of the Lord!
The Lord is God and He has given us the light.
Appoint a solemn day, with shady boughs,
Even to the horns of the altar.
Thou art my God, and I thank Thee;
My God, I exalt Thee.

Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good.
For His kindness is everlasting.

